

TYPES OF GIVING

Many believe that stewardship is synonymous with fund-raising. However, as illustrated in the following table, there are significant differences in purpose, goals, relationship to God, and in our discipleship when we give as stewards than when we give as fundraisers.

Characteristics	Fund-Raising	Stewardship
Purpose	Fund the desired activity	Worship God
Goal	Meet budget; pay the bills	Serve God with full integrity
Realm of activity	Financial	Spiritual
Source of resources	Donors	God
Guiding document	Institutional budget	Bible
Motivation to give	Satisfy personal needs or emotions	Thank God; fulfill spiritual responsibility
Personal return on investment	Self-satisfaction; tax deduction	Joy of giving; blessing of obedience to God
Precipitating relationship	Cause, institution or individual	God
Primary outcome of a donation	A better society	Bonding with God; His trust justified
Reasons for not donating	Skepticism, caution, prefer other opportunities	Ignorance of responsibility, lack of commitment to God, confusion about responsibility

The following are reasons that a steward gives of his/her time, talent and treasure:

1. **Everything comes from God** (including time, talent and treasure). “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness...for everything in heaven and earth is yours...Wealth and honor come from you...Everything comes from you” (1 Chronicles 29:11-14). Additional passages are Philipppians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 9:8; James 2:5; 1 Corinthians 1:26-27; 2 Corinthians 4:7.
2. **God gave first.** “God...gives generously to all...God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment...He provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy (James 1:5; 1 Timothy 6:17; Acts 14:17).

3. **We honor God.** “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the **first fruits** of **all** your crops...No man should appear before the Lord empty handed; each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord has blessed you...the **tithe**...so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always...you are exalted as head over all” (Proverbs 3:9-10; Deuteronomy 16:16-17; 14:23; 1 Chronicles 29:11).
4. **We will give an account of ourselves to God.** “Each of us will give an account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12).
5. **It shows our maturity in Christ.** “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7).
6. **It shows our obedience.** “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty...**Command** them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share” (Malachi 3:10; 1 Timothy 6:18).
7. **It shows our love.** “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” (1 John 3:17-18).
8. **It helps the body of Christ.** “Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints” (2 Corinthians 8:2-4).
9. **It supports ministries.** “If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? ...the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel...I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me... for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account (1 Corinthians 9:11,14; Philippians 4:10,16-17).
10. **It enlarges your “harvest.”** “...and God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work...Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God” (2 Corinthians 9:8, 9-11).
11. **It provides for equality.** “Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, as it is written: ‘He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little’” (2 Corinthians 8:13-15).
12. **It directs our focus to the Lord.** “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something **to share** with those in need...For of this you can be sure: no greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Ephesians 4:28; 5:5).

THE FOLLOWING ARE BENEFITS THAT THE STEWARD RECEIVES:

1. **It blesses us!** “It is more blessed to give than to receive...One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed...Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you...then your barns will be filled to overflowing...A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor...He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done” (Acts 20:35; Proverbs 11:24-25; Luke 6:38; Proverbs 3:9; 22:9; 19:17).
2. **It protects us from an evil attitude.** “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. Whoever loves money never has money enough...” (1 Timothy 6:10; Ecclesiastes 5:10).
3. You will have a **closer relationship** with the Lord. Matthew 6:21 says, “*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” When giving, visualize yourself giving to Him in person.
4. Our **character** will become more unselfish, as we follow Christ’s example of giving.
5. It will help bring **contentment** as we follow His Word (1 Timothy 6:6-10 and 17-19).
6. It will bring **God’s blessing**. Malachi 3:10 says, “*...so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.*” Luke 6:38 says, “*Give and it will be given to you. A good measure pressed down, shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap.*” Note: This does not necessarily mean an increase in *financial* wealth.
7. **It provides a future reward.** “In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19).

“THE ONE WHO LIVES FOR THIS LIFE ONLY WILL HAVE ETERNITY TO REGRET IT.”